

REMARKS

By the above actions, claims 15, 16, 31, and 33 have been amended. In view of these actions and the following remarks, further consideration of this application is requested.

Claims 15-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by the Collins patent. Furthermore, since the Collins patent shows only half of the connector and incorporates by reference Swanson U.S. Patent No. 3,221,292 as being the type of connector to which the Collins patent relates, a copy of the Swanson patent is appended hereto along with a form 1449 for use by the Examiner in making it officially of record. However, this rejection appears to be based upon a misreading of the disclosure of the Collins patent and/or a misinterpretation of the claims of this application, and should be withdrawn for the following reasons, even taking into consideration the disclosure of the Swanson patent.

Firstly, it is pointed out that the structure shown in the Collins patent represents only half of an electrical connector, as noted above, and thus, teaches nothing about the aspects of the claimed invention pertaining to how an end-face connection is formed between at least one multi-strand conductor of a first cable and an electrical device or second cable. Furthermore, by reference to the Swanson patent it can be seen that the "assembly sealing grommet" of the Collins patent is for use in a connector having pin contacts 25 that are received in conductor sockets 27 for forming an electrical connection rather than making "penetration connection into the strands" of a multi-strand conductor as shown in Fig. 4 of this application and set forth in amended claim 15.

Furthermore, in accordance with the invention set forth in both independent, i.e., claims 15 & 31, the first section of soft material forms a plurality of core guidance channels; and the second section of hard material that is harder than the soft material forms a positioning aid, the plurality of core guidance channels and the positioning aid being shaped to align the plurality of conductors of the multicore cable to the plurality of contact elements of the other cable or electrical device (again, see Fig. 4 of this application). On the other hand, the grommet materials of Collins/Swanson do not guide and position the conductors of one cable relative to the contact elements of the other cable or electrical device, but rather merely serve as seals for the contact pins of the respective connector half, playing no role whatsoever in the formation of the connection between the contact pins and contact sockets.

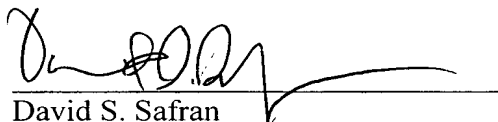
The independent claims have been amended above to explicitly recite the above noted characteristics of the present invention which were implicit in the original language.

Inasmuch as these features are neither disclosed nor suggested by Collins, even with reference to Swanson, the rejection under § 102 based on the Collins patent should now be withdrawn and such action is hereby requested.

As for the Examiner's rejection of claims 20, 26, 29 and 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over the Collins patent when viewed in combination with the Koch patent, given the points noted above relative to the Collins patent and those set forth in applicant's preceding Amendment of February, 2003 with respect to the Koch patent (which comments are incorporated by reference herein), it should be clear that these patents cannot render obvious the present invention no matter how they might be viewed singly or in combination with each other. Therefore, it is requested that this rejection also be withdrawn

While the present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, should the Examiner find some issue to remain unresolved, or should any new issues arise, which could be eliminated through discussions with applicant's representative, then the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone in order that the further prosecution of this application can thereby be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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